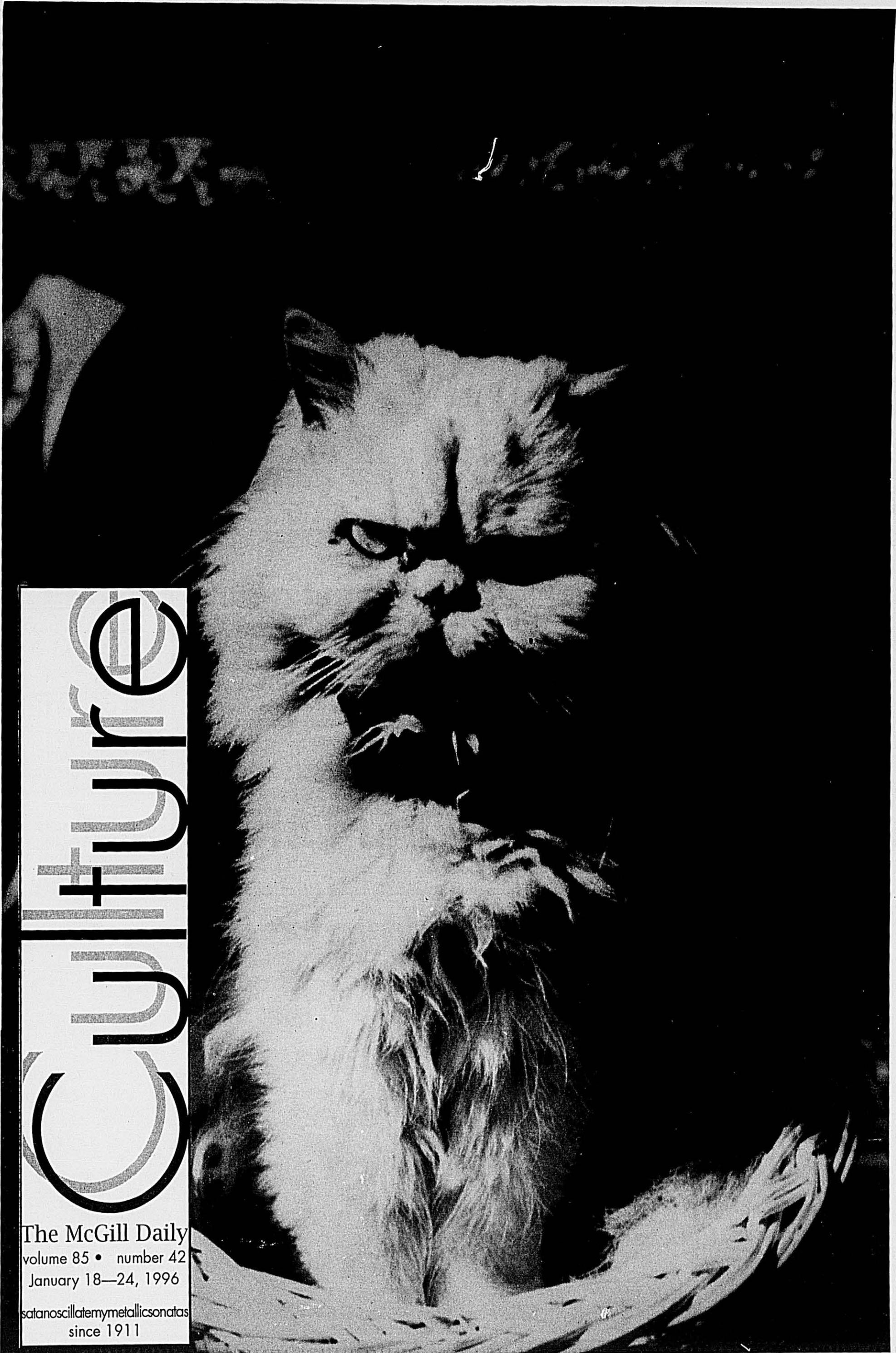




Culture

The McGill Daily
volume 85 • number 42
January 18—24, 1996

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Thursday, January 18-24, 1996

The McGill Daily Culture

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PELTIER FREE AT LAST?

After nearly two decades in a Kansas jail, American native rights activist Leonard Peltier may soon be free.

Sources close to Peltier's lawyer and defense committee have reported that Peltier's case may soon be heard by the Kansas Parole Board. Instead of a Presidential pardon — a long standing demand of many native rights activists — the Amnesty International declared prisoner of conscience may soon be quietly released by the Parole Board.

Peltier was convicted in 1979 of the shooting deaths of two FBI agents at the Pine Ridge Reserve in North Dakota. The evidence used to convict has long since been discounted — the bullets are not from the crime scene, the affidavits were fabricated, and the three other men convicted have been released. In 1989, a U.S. attorney admitted in court that he had no idea who killed the two agents.

Peltier was part of a group of the American Indian Movement (AIM) activists that travelled to



Pine Ridge in 1971 at the request of some of the members of the community. Living conditions were appalling, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs had appointed a heavy-handed chief to keep order.

Violence erupted shortly after the AIM activists had made camp just inside the boundaries of the reserve. An unmarked car, with siren blaring, roared into the encampment. After a brief exchange of gunfire, the agents — who never identified themselves — were dead.

Peltier's conviction has a strong Canadian connection. He escaped to Canada after the murders, only to be extradited — by order of then Minister of Justice Jean Chrétien — to the United States to stand trial.

The travesty of justice that was Peltier's extradition and conviction was a major part of

an FBI campaign to destroy AIM, the largest and most militant Plains native movement since the one led by Sioux leader Crazy Horse. AIM's political philosophies of self-determination and resistance to American economic and political domination attracted widespread support in impoverished American native communities.

Peltier's conviction, and the FBI campaign against AIM, destroyed the organisation, but reinforced their statement that the American government has a racist and colonial mentality towards native nations.

"Peltier has been captured as a symbol of what happens if you stand up for your people," said Ann Dreaver of the Leonard Peltier Defence Committee.

- m-j milloy

Letters

On Kashmir's right to secede To the Daily,

In regards to "An Interview with Kahlid Hasan" by Ahmer Qadeer (Jan. 8, 1996):

The contention that Pakistan was created to be the homeland for the Muslims of India is a fallacy. At the time of the partition of India into India and Pakistan no more than ten per cent of Indian Muslims, mostly from the North Indian States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, moved to Pakistan.

Today there are more Muslims in India than the entire population of Pakistan. After living in their 'homeland' for more than 45 years, not only Muslims who moved from India, but their children and grandchildren who were born in Pakistan are still called 'mohajirs' which means settlers in Arabic.

According to Mr. Kahlid Hasan the state of Kashmir has

a right to secede from India and join Pakistan because the majority of Kashmiris are Muslims. According to his logic it can safely be said that the 120 million Muslims of India should be moved to Pakistan. The governments of India and Pakistan should jointly work out a programme of their peaceful transfer to their 'homeland'. Moreover Ladakh and Jammu regions of Kashmir should be granted the right to separate from Kashmir because the majority of Ladakhis are Buddhists and the majority of Jammuites are Hindus.

The real problem is not India but the outdated notion that the sub-continent of India with a total population of 1.2 billion people must be divided along religious lines. This can only lead to the creation of a nightmare scenario of one thousand Bosnias engulfing all

of South Asia and the Middle East.

R.V. Shree

SSMU spend the money on beer?

To the Daily,

I'd like to thank you for your coverage of the SSMU Used Textbook Co-op ("They're used but not used up," Jan. 15). I am very glad that the Daily chose to cover the new service.

However, I was misquoted in the article. I was quoted as saying that McGill Bookstore manager Horst Bitschofsky was against SSMU starting a used textbook exchange because "we would spend the profits on beer." I did not say this. I did say that Horst Bitschofsky told me there is perhaps some anti-SSMU sentiment among McGill Bookstore staff because once the Bookstore's mortgage is

paid off, its profits will go to SSMU. Horst added that among some employees there is little incentive to work hard to pay off the mortgage because when SSMU starts receiving their profits, SSMU might use the money to subsidize beer.

Perhaps I was not as clear with the reporter about my November 1994 conversation with Horst as I should have been.

Mark Feldman
Manager, SSMU Used
Textbook Co-op

P.B. Mukhopahyay, please come to the Daily office in Union B-03 to shorten your letter as soon as possible. Thank you.

The Daily accepts all letters that are 300 words or less, provided they are not racist, sexist or homophobic.

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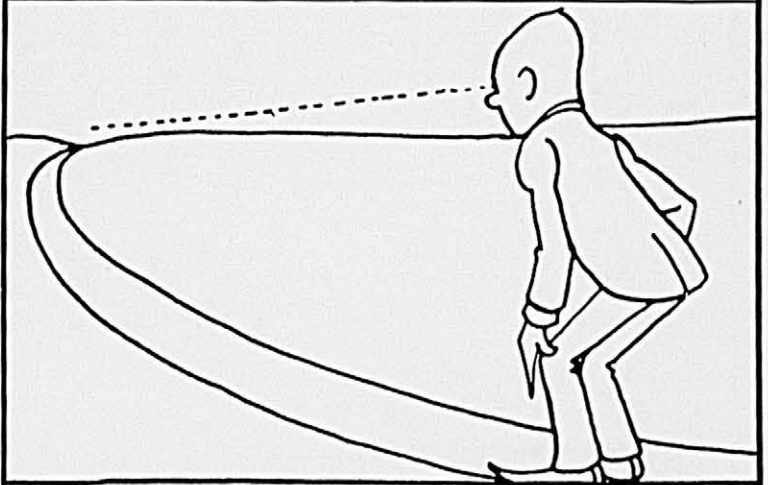
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This Saturday, January 20, *The Daily* will hold its annual retreat. All *Daily* staff members are strongly encouraged to attend this important, wide-ranging and unlimited discussion of our community, our paper and our direction.

For more information come to today's staff meeting at 17h in Union B-03, or just swing by before Saturday.

Off the darkroom floor...



No Paking, Chinatown
Malaka, Malaysia, 1996
by Cameron Booth

brief

Much awaited provincial hearings to begin Trash talk

A great garbage debate has been a long time coming in Québec. And for Montréal the need is even greater. As the largest garbage producing municipality in Canada, citizens and environmental issues organisations have called again and again for the province to clear a path for better waste management.

So when the Ministry of Environment announced last week that it is launching public hearings on waste management, those waiting for this go-ahead rejoiced.

The hearings will centre around a series of proposals made by the Ministry of Environment to be put in a report entitled 'A Plan for Responsible and Sustainable Waste Management.'

The hearings are to begin in March and will continue until June. However, before that, the ministry will conduct province-wide preliminary information tours starting this week. The tour will hit Montréal on February 22.

The stated purpose of these sessions are for the ministry to "gain input" from local communities and experts around the province.

The citizen's environmental group STOP, in a press release, says that it welcomes the government initiative to begin discussions on solid waste.

STOP and other environmental groups, however, are cautious.

After all, it required a huge demonstration in Longueuil in November to even see a

response from the Québec government on the issue of waste management.

During its election campaign in 1994, the Parti Québécois made many promises to environmental groups to address their concerns on garbage, but had been largely silent until now.

The fact is that Québec's laws on waste management are what many term as "lax" or, as Benoit Marin of Action Re-buts would call it, "a mess."

Under the current situation, companies can get away with polluting as the fines on violations are so low.

It is these lax laws which environmental groups such as Q-PIRG, STOP and Action-Rebuts hope will be redressed as a result of these hearings.

But STOP has already criticised the Ministry of Environment for under-advertising the hearings.

The group comments that the public announcements are "dull" and can only be found "in the back pages of the newspapers."

As well, STOP says that it is wary of the Province's commitment to waste management. Almost in the same breath as the announcement for the hearings, environment minister Jacques Brassard approved a massive development plan to create a mega-landfill site in Montréal's Lachenaie area.

STOP says that this is in direct conflict with the idea behind the 'Plan for Responsible

and Sustainable Waste management.' The group recommends that Brassard give a stronger indication of his commitment to the public debate, as there is already much "cynicism" about the ideas.

STOP says it is hoping the new landfill site is "some kind of an aberration."

While some are critical, other groups such as McGill's Q-PIRG are willing to give the hearings a chance. Allison Dudley of Q-PIRG says that the group is applying for grants for interested students who will work on making reports to the commission when it comes to Montréal.

Anyone interested can call Q-PIRG at 398 7432.

— anupgrewal

The Space by Patrick Borden

A Molotov Cocktail of Drugs, Politics and Social Dissidence

by mikedullen

A chronicle of conflict between individuals and the state in an anytime-soon future, *The Space* details a reality twisted by the subversion of ideology, lifestyle and self-perception in a film-noir urban realm. Bullied by consumerism, prostrate before legalised drug consumption and trivialised by the mass media, Patrick Borden's charges roam like free radicals in the isolation of the city.

A native of Vancouver, Borden treads the same ground as his much-celebrated peer, Douglas Coupland. However, that's where the similarities end, as Borden defines his storyline less in terms of whole generations and more as a collection of ideas. Characters aren't assigned any definite age but are described in relative terms. Borden guides these through stages of ideological soul-searching that have ironic implications and startling real-life compromises.

The Space is less about the cynically defined characters within the narrative than a comment about Borden's Wirthian-Socialist leanings. His vision of the state and its absolute mastery over the public realm is both chilling and disconcerting as the citizenry is regulated, corralled and harassed into succumbing to unbridled consumerism and the capitalist/industrialist ethic.

The urban setting is painted as fundamentally sterile, isolating

and bleak in the manner of Louis Wirth and the Chicago School of Urbanism and its philosophy of thought concentrating on the human condition within urban space. At the same time, *The Space* espouses the theory that cities hold the critical mass of like-minded individuals and allow individuals to seek out others of congruent lifestyles. The characters within the novella continually struggle and rail against this isolation and experience of a merging of cultures that threatens to disintegrate the fabric of their moral, political and social values.

Borden does stereotype his characters as being constantly ideologically-embattled and has a tendency to engage in seemingly interminable debates on the politics of anarchy and order. He also describes in apt fashion, however, the futility of those who bypass such intellectualisations by satirising the shallowness and purposelessness of the channel-surfing life ethic.

However, Borden's work is not a self-deprecating effort at engendering depression but rather an exploration of the human conflict between idealism and the state-imposed ethic. Borden succeeds in blending a political history lesson within his future world paradigm to arrive at an intellectualisation of his world that is surprisingly relevant to our own.

Real world reflections are evident in the regulation of

controlled substances, the strict outlining of what is defined as public space and the wholesale assault of the visual media, such as television on the public consciousness. Furthermore, Borden depicts a fragile ecology where human interaction is fragmented and exclusive — a pattern that can only be rent by the deconstruction of the values of the new mode of social reproduction.

The Space is not aimed at pigeonholing factions within society, however, but rather at delineating the marginalisation of the individual in the facelessness of western society. 'The Space' that is constantly elaborated upon in the narrative is revealed as the territory of the mind rather than any physical plane that Borden may refer to in metaphors. Thus the battle for the control of human thought and views of itself and its place in the human-made world is the determinant of human action and social patterns. While theorising the workings of 'fictitious' state and the domain of thought, Borden succeeds in exposing his essentially humanist perspective. *The Space* convincingly portrays urgency and failure of resolve while romanticising the tragedy that is human existence.

Patrick Borden's *The Space* is published by Empyrean Press.

THE SPACE

PATRICK BORDEN

Jay Ferguson's *Suburban Legend*

POP CULTURE ADDICTION AND WHAT IT DID TO ME

by gilshochat

It is not very often that really good dark comedies are made. Even rarer are dark comedies that successfully satirise various institutions in society, from the media to the "politically correct" movement. Montréal director Jay Ferguson's *Suburban Legend*

is an attempt to fulfill both these criteria.

The hour-long film depicts the urban alienation that is a byproduct of modern society and the dysfunctionality that accompanies it.

The first part of the picture involves a thirteen year old boy who, when confronted with his own pubescent sexuality and that of his parents (he walks in on them having sex), finds that the subject is taboo in his household. Thus, in search of answers he turns to the 'Holy Grail' of the hard core pornographic industry — *Hustler*

magazine. This further alienates the boy and, as if to underline his isolation, he does not speak and is not spoken to throughout the movie.

The second part of the movie shows 'Junior' seven years later as a college undergraduate. Here we see a portrait of a man who has completely broken down all lines of communication with the outside world and has one outlet left, the ultimate product of 'enlightenment' — television. It is here that Ferguson shows his adeptness as a director by revealing the baseness to which our T.V. culture has succumbed. By showing clips from the 'box', Ferguson uncovers the lack of social conscience that television instills and its Ricki Lake/Schwarzeneggerisation of our mass culture.

The excerpts showing what's on T.V. are probably some of the most effective in the movie. For example, on one American station, a hillbilly wearing a 'Friends of the NRA' camouflage T-shirt proudly

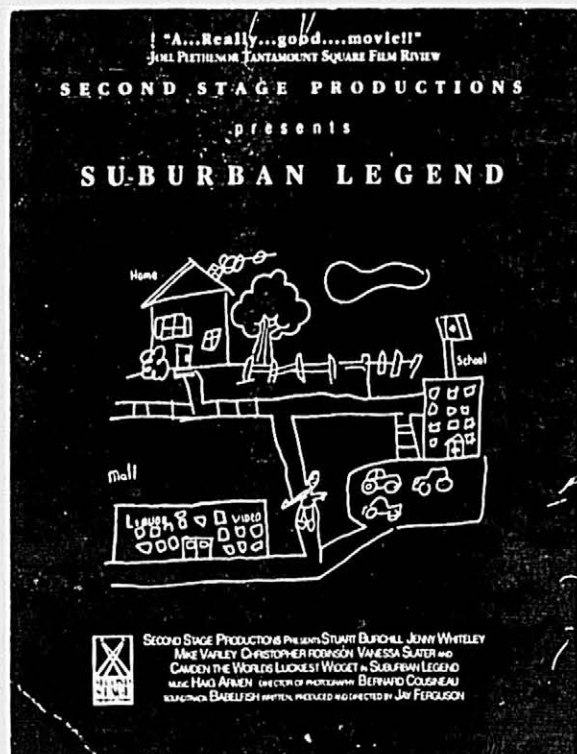
proclaims that he needs his high powered MK-9 machine gun "because now that they've got that open doors immigration policy, a man has got to have some protection." In another example, two men violently tie up and rape a woman, a scene quite traumatically shot, after which they go into the next room where they chug down some beer while bikini clad 'babes' come on to them. The whole episode is in fact a beer commercial.

The film plays on our obsessive addiction to pop-culture and the distorted view of reality it instills in us. The boy in the movie sees women as objects and violence as the only solution to his problems. He fantasises about going to the discotheque above his apartment, which keeps him awake at night, and gunning down the people in it. Illustrating this with dark humour, Ferguson makes a strong point well, but it is made over and over again without suggesting any real solutions.

Another disadvantage of this in-your-face script is that it leaves very little room for subtlety in the film-making.

Cinematographically, *Suburban Legend* begins with promise but turns out to be quite dull. For an independent film, the shots are all too conventional, reminding the viewer of the bad old days of Canadian film in the late '70s and early '80s, when looking cheap was the rule not the exception. Another unfortunate motif is the use of econo-sets throughout the film, which do nothing to improve the low budget feel of the movie.

If the picture's visual quality is rather weak, it can be excused by the youthfulness of an inexperienced director who, with more hands-on experience, could become a cutting edge director. In *Suburban Legend*, however, Ferguson elicits the proper blend of both nihilism and tasteless profanity that allows the film to be both funny and very pointed, which is a definite credit to the film-maker.



WORDS, IMAGES AND OTHER FORBIDDEN FRUIT

by meredithcohen

Now is an interesting moment to be alive. The pre-millennium jitters have put everyone in a fervour and those of us aware should sit back, enjoy the madness and take advantage of it. After all, these kinds of hysterics only happen once every one thousand years or so.

But what does this have to do with the title your eyes have just glanced over, you ask, kind reader? Well, it has all to do with extremity, the swing of the pendulum, the sign of the times, and what is 'suitable' for our collective eyes, ears and minds.

Forbidden Passages: Writings Banned in Canada, a book recently published in the United States, is an anthology of what Canadian customs officials have deemed too racy for our virgin senses and pure minds.

The funny thing is that, although the collection did contain some fairly hardcore S&M pieces, most of the works confiscated at the border were what I would deem inoffensive, if that indeed is the criteria by which any work in question is judged.

But of course, therein lies the rub. You, dear reader, know just as little about what 'inoffensive' means to me as does your average custom agent. See the problem?

Fuller in one of the two introductory essays that precede the actual 'contraband' literature.

In this same essay, entitled "The Case against Canada Customs," Fuller goes on to tell of another circumstance during which a customs officer testifies in court that she seized Jane Rule's *Contract with the World* "because she thought it might be hate propaganda: 'It just... sounds like it may have a political theme.'"

A basketful of forbidden fruit

The most shocking thing about this anthology however, is the wide breadth of work that it encompasses and the diversity of literature deemed forbidden fruit.

Other works included in the anthology, like Rule's piece, which is the story of a woman and lesbian coming to terms with the world around her, are not sexually explicit but address issues that, to some, are abnormal and abhorrent.

Will denying the right for these ideas to be expressed make them cease to exist? Will recalcitrance stop this world from being a world of flux?

I suppose quite a few of the works can be considered 'politically subversive' — like bell hooks' "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance"

from *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. hooks, a scholar at Yale University, writes a thoughtful essay examining racial issues, the concept of the 'mystified other' and its treatment and



in this dream there was this young guy about 21 and he was aware that I wanted to kiss him and he demanded to fight I found I had somehow learned all these great boxing moves - I beat him up just a little to get him to stop bothering me. I still wanted to kiss him.

TEXT AND GRAPHIC BY DAVID WOJNAROWICZ

merchandising in mass culture. The book made customs a bit squeamish. Too much truth?

Susie Bright's *Sexual Reality: A Virtual Sex World Reader* is also apparently too harsh for custom's sensitivities, as is Joseph Beam's "Brother to Brother: Words From the Heart" from *In The Life: A Black Gay Anthology*.

The excerpt by Bright in *Forbidden Passages* is called "Egg Sex" and discusses issues dealing with sexuality during pregnancy and how to make labour less laborious.

She adequately dispels the myth that pregnant women shouldn't have sex, and even goes as far as to suggest using a vibrator to ease the pain of contractions. It does sound a bit crazy, but if it works, women may like labour pains a bit more. Status? Of course, seized at the border. It had the word vibrator in it — it must be smut.

"Brother to Brother" is a very moving work which talks not only about love between men, but love between black men. We hope this would not be too shocking for people to deal with, but apparently it is. But perhaps times they are a-changin'?

The 'C' word (and we don't mean 'Cookie')

Now I know that you cannot tell a lot from these titles without having read the excerpts —

although the irony may be obvious anyway — but the point is, neither can border officers, and their decisions make all the difference.

At least it can for small booksellers around Canada, like Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto and Little Sister's Bookstore in Vancouver. Both stores have lost considerable amounts of money due to seizures and court expenses.

The proceeds of the book will go to benefit Little Sister's cause, as they have vowed

to take their legal dispute over censorship with Canadian Customs to the Canadian Supreme Court, if necessary.

And now I've finally said it: The bad word, the scary word, the word no one wants to hear and the thing people would like to believe does not happen in North America — especially not in Canada, which has been referred in the last few years as one of the best places to live in the entire world. Surprise, it happens.

CENSORSHIP, right before our overstimulated and oh-so-well-informed eyes.

So now that we've really got down to the dirt, you may ask, "So what's the big fuckin' deal if some dyke's S&M porn is withheld at the border of my country? I wouldn't want to read it anyway, it means nothing to me."

But among the titles of books seized since 1986 is Oscar Wilde's *Teleny* and, more recently, the chilli pepper cookbook, *Hot*

Hotter Hottest.

Hmmm, valid? Maybe, maybe not. But, as Pat Califia says so nicely in her essay "Dangerous Tongues" (incidentally she also authors one of the lesbian S&M pieces that appear in *Forbidden Passages*), "What the state can do to a piece of paper, it can do to a human body." Which is quite obviously a bit scary.

But if Ms. Califia is a bit to risqué for your tastes (which she well may be for some), then take it from the Victorian, John Stuart Mills; he also had a few words to say *On Liberty*: "That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of our time."

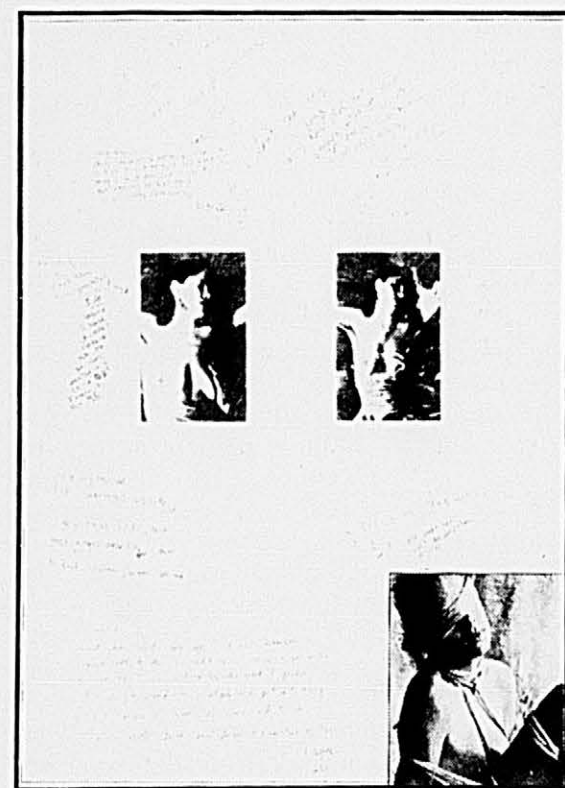
Our time? OUR TIME? It makes you wonder. It makes you wonder what those words mean when mature adults are being supervised like children who are caught with their hands in the cookie jar.

But father government, reading won't give us cavities even if we are reading about what is considered by the handslappers to be 'deviant sex' or subversive politics. Oh no daddy, we may even learn to think for ourselves. Then things will really get frantic. Enjoy the mayhem. Besides the forbidden fruits are always the sweetest.

Forbidden Passages: Writings Banned in Canada is published by Cleis Press.

TAKEN FROM TOM OF FINLAND

USE
A
RUBBER



PHOTOS EXCERPTED FROM DRAWING THE LINE BY KISS & TELL, PRESS GANG

It seems that much of the literature confiscated was 'banned' on very shady grounds. *Strokes*, a book on rowing, was considered suspiciously suggestive and thus detained, writes Janine

from *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. hooks, a scholar at Yale University, writes a thoughtful essay examining racial issues, the concept of the 'mystified other' and its treatment and



by anupgrewal

Talk about strange bedfellows — the Canadian beer industry and environmental groups across the country are finding a common voice in a battle to maintain the re-use ethic of waste management.

Recently, large American beer companies and soft drink manufacturers have proposed a step back to recycling beer and soft drink containers instead of increasing efforts to re-fill containers.

For years environmentalists have promoted reducing, reusing and recycling as a less environmentally detrimental approach to waste management.

But as Benoit Marin of Montréal's Action-Rebuts points out "reusing is often forgotten." Governments and industry alike have often gone the route of recycling, and while curbside recycling programmes in many Canadian communities are working, reusing materials is yet a more effective route to waste management.

Change for your bottle

The Canadian beer industry has traditionally been a promoter for reusing, by placing a deposit exchange incentive for consumers to return empty bottles. Many provinces have strengthened this initiative by creating legislation that makes deposits and refilling of bottles mandatory.

Ontario and Québec both have systems of this type in place.

Now, with proposals like the ones made by large American companies and members of the Canadian Industry Packaging Stewardship initiative — a consortium of Canadian Grocery manufacturers and others like Coke and Pepsi — reusing is under threat.

According to C.G. Helie, Corporate Director at the Brewers of Ontario in Mississauga, proposals like the ones made by these companies are "tipping the three-R hierarchy upside down."

Helie cautions that jumping on this American-type bandwagon poses a threat to Canadian waste management ethics.

Gord Perks of the newly formed National Coalition for Reuse, agrees. Perks and other environmental group members, representing provinces from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island, came together in late November to form the coalition.

"For a variety of reasons, reusing is waning in Canada,"

—Gord Perks, National Coalition for Reuse

Perks says that although there are many local reusing projects in place across Canada, it was time to turn the effort into a nation-wide one.

"We want the national coalition to bring together different provincial efforts on reusing, to do research and to defend those reuse systems that are in place already and to add new materials."

Perks and Marin both assert that now is a good time to begin a campaign on reusing in Canada. Even without the threat posed by the large, mostly American, companies, "for a variety of reasons, reusing is waning in Canada," Perks says.

Reusing: From coast to coast?

Perks adds that in Ontario, despite the model system set up by breweries to reuse, the province's government is not very effective in supporting the practice, often not following up with prosecutions of those who violate reusing laws.

Pointing to a recent attempt by the pro-recycling industries

to have their proposal presented in the Ontario legislature, Perks admits that while it was not tabled, "it was only defeated because there were industry guys who were against the proposal and not just environmentalists."

Because of the sometimes weak voice of the environmental lobby and because reusing is uneven across Canada, Perks says that a national coalition is important.

Marin comments, "There is definitely a need in Canada to promote the second R."

Speaking specifically about Québec, Marin says that he sees areas in which the province can learn from others and vice-versa.

"In reusing, Québec is far ahead of other provinces. Other provinces do not reuse much except for beer bottles..." and now even that may not be for long.

It may be difficult for the reusing ethic to be maintained in what Perks is calling mainly "a conflict of economic interests."

Canadians rely on the will to volunteer? Perks is skeptical, pointing out that without regulatory legislation and auditing in place, waste management won't work.

He says that the pro-recycling lobby claims they are modeling themselves after a similar system in Germany — known as "the Green Dot Programme" — in which companies with recyclable materials must pay for the recycling, but the Germans back this up with government regulations.

However, the beer companies in the U.S. have been successful in getting their proposals passed. Helie says that they have gone state by state to put in place a "one way" recycling system which is largely to their advantage.

And now, says Helie, they are coming after Canada. "Their mentality is 'what's so different about Canada?'" says Helie.

But there is a difference. Ontario beer manufacturers, who according to Helie have been re-using since 1927, re-committed themselves to

brewers association is a signatory to the RECYQ agreement between government, industry and

retailers to maintain refillable soft drink and beer containers and to have deposits on bottles.

Prince Edward Island has also made a name for itself with what Perks terms as a "rigorous" soft drink container law.

And beer companies and environmentalists in Canada are not at odds, says Helie. In fact, he says that the two lobbies have had "a strong relationship" ever since the beer trade wars between Canadian and American companies in 1992 and 1993.

So far, Helie comments, the threat to reusing is only that — a threat. According to Helie, many in the Canadian beer industry, environmentalists and provinces have said, "thanks — but we have our own approach."

Nonetheless, the National coalition on Reuse is planning to hold a conference on the issue in the coming few months and to begin their campaign. For Perks, there are many more issues surrounding reusing than just the beer and soft drink industry, although that is what initially brought the Coalition together. Looking at the way waste management is handled in Canada, Perks says "instead of working our way from recycling to reusing, we are going from reusing to recycling. We want to go back up."

reusing in 1992. "We now recover our bottles, cans, bottle caps, six-pack rings, cases — anything that we put out, we recover," Helie says.

According to Helie, this has meant that there is a 98 per cent recovery rate of beer associated products in Ontario.

Similarly, the Québec



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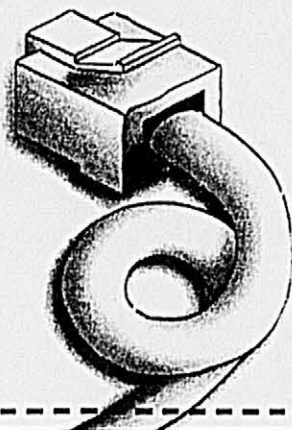
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CD REVIEWS

**FEAR - HAVE
ANOTHER BEER WITH
FEAR
(FEAR/SECTOR 2
RECORDS)**

Disputably the king of "Inyeface" punk, Leeving and his pals return with *Have another Beer...*, sending off rapid-fire attacks in typical Fear style. This punk rawk is not the glittering,

**BLAST-OFF COUNTRY
STYLE - IN MY ARMS
(TEENBEAT/
MATADOR)**

After a slew of seven-inch singles released from 1993 to 1995, one singles compilation and one studio LP entitled *Rainbow Mayonnaise Deluxe*, BOCS are back in full swing with this EP. Recorded by Teenbeat Records owner, ex-Unrest guitarist and Air Miami frontman Mark Robinson, this sweet, six song affair uncovers a new side of a band known for its '50s beach party squeamishness and youthful innocence. Receiving initial notoriety as a fun band that "never really had a grasp at how to play their instruments,"

**WADE HEMSWORTH
- THE SONGS OF
WADE HEMSWORTH
(BLACKFLY /
PEERMUSIC)**

From the creator of the song for great National Film Board (I think) vignettes like "The Blackfly Song" comes a full album of folk songs. Here is a musician who could be ranked among Canadian cult icons like Stompin' Tom for his unabashed Canuck content. After a cursory listen to this album's songs, one could accuse Wade Hemsworth of drawing too heavily on age-old Canadian clichés. However, this is for the most part unfounded: To a great extent, these songs are written in the spirit of the pioneer and reflect life on the edge of a new country.

Despite the fact that Hemsworth's voice is aging, he sings sometimes wistful, sometimes humorous tales accompanied solely by acoustic guitar. This style of music lends the album the sense that this man follows the tradition of wandering troubadour. These songs are richly woven with experiences from a man's life and, like all oral traditions, they pass on a sense of the past. The fact that



sterilised and overproduced fare that we are growing accustomed to; instead, it's pissed off, anti-social and claims it wants nothing more than to "Drink Some Beer." Perhaps it's justified that Fear is now based in Texas (what is it about Texas and that neo-redneck/punk thing anyway?).

Considering that the word "beer" shows up in four of the 16 song titles and in three other songs — besides, of course, the title — there seems to be a theme here. But if you manage to see around the image of Neanderthal beer swilling drunks and read a little social commentary into Leeving's lyrics, there is indeed a grim portrait of America (and therefore, by proxy, Canada), as Fear tackles such issues as wife abuse ("Honour and Obey") and false U.S. pride ("U.S.A").

There is also a good deal of silliness. Take the song "Ugly as You:" "As visions of you turn to / slime crud and ooze / no brains in your head / you've got nothing to lose / the ugly patrol / ain't got nothin' on you / I've never seen anyone as ugly as you." Listener be forewarned: This is not upbeat rock — it's old school (if such a thing does exist) punk rawk.

- jaymccoy

BOCS has developed its song structures into longer, more complex pop gems.

With the high pitched vocals of singer Evelyn Hurley clamoring along with the evolved and stylised strumming of guitarist Allison Rigo, *In My Arms* blends the band's cutesy past with its new grown-up instrumentation. On the last track, "He's My Kind of Guy," the keyboard intro sounds like a game of Ms. Pac-Man stuck on the marriage sequence. As a follow-up to a self-released single on their own White Devil label, where one song was entitled "Eric Gaffaney" (after the ex-Sebadoh drummer), this EP explores the evolution of a band from their kindergarten days in the playground to finally beating up the junior high bully.

- jonahbrucker-cohen

THE SONGS OF WADE HEMSWORTH



this disc is in part supported by the Canada Council for the Arts indicates that this material is deemed an important cultural contribution, even in these times of budget clear-cutting.

- jaymccoy

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EVENTS

Thursday January 18

- The Yellow Door presents Literature Live featuring Stephen Frasier. Door opens at 20h, show starts at 20h30, \$3 at the door, 3625 Aylmer between Pine and Prince Arthur. Call 398-2371.
- McGill Students' International Development Initiative (MSIDI) meeting at 17h30. Call 844-1530 for more information.

Friday January 19

- McGill Students for Literacy presents the welcome back bash: Fundraiser for Shawbridge Youth at Risk Program, upstairs at Bal St. Louis, at 22h, \$3 donation.
- The Yellow Door presents Live Music featuring Matthew Higginbotham and Jason Gooticher, with open stage after the show. Door opens 20h, show starts at 20h30, \$3 at the door, 3625

Aylmer between Pine and Prince Arthur. Info. 398-2371.

Saturday, January 20

- The Yellow Door presents a special show featuring Lhasa se Sela. Door opens at 19h30, show starts at 20h, \$7 at the door (\$6 for students and seniors), 3625 Aylmer between Pine and Prince Arthur. Info. 398-2371.

Sunday January 21

- The Mexican Solidarity Network presents current news from the Zapatistas of Chiapas, to commemorate two years of resistance. Bar Voltaire, 11 Prince Arthur W., from 19h to 21h.

Monday January 22

- Come out, come out wherever you are! Are you a person of colour who is queer, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited?

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- World University Services of Canada (WUSC) is hosting an international film festival, featuring films from Africa, Latin America and Asia, from Jan. 22 to Jan. 25, in Burnside 426. \$1 per movie or \$3 for all four nights. Free popcorn!

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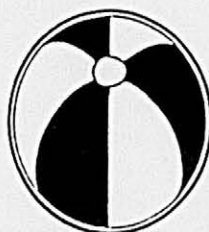
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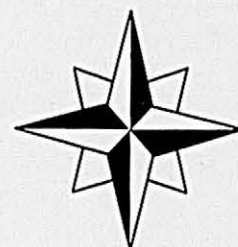
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Montrealers gather to form a black collective

A COMMON FRONT FOR ACTION

by susannahschmidt

Francophone and anglophone members of Montréal's black communities voted Saturday to form a committee to mobilise around common political and socio-economic issues in Montréal and Québec.

"We are very satisfied with the outcome of the meeting," stated one of the organisers, Tony Jones, in an interview. "I am confident that we are capable of harnessing the human resources we have for the benefit of the black people of Québec."

About sixty people came together at the NDG community centre to express support for united black leadership in Montréal and Québec. By the end of the meeting, a co-ordinating committee was also proposed.

This committee will include approximately twenty leaders and citizens from various existing cultural and political black organisations and communities. Among the representatives will be U3 McGill Engineering student Gerry Adams, who works with the the Black Students Network of McGill.

Jones, of the Montréal guyanese community, and Marc Germaine and Dirval Lourdis, both of Haitian descent, delivered speeches stressing the immediate need for effective black economic, social and political organisation.

Speakers foremost identified black on black violence and black unemployment as areas for discussion and future action. Lourdis specifically called for support for single black mothers and for mindfulness of black youth and children.

The forum also unanimously supported McGill students' appeal for action to support McGill's threatened African Studies program. Leaders agreed to participate in and encourage on as wide a basis as possible a letter-writing campaign to McGill administration. The letter campaign will reiterate the importance of the continuation and expansion of African Studies.

Where unity lies

As well as these concrete plans for mobilisation, much of the meeting was taken up by a discussion on unity within the black community.

Criticising the "current black leadership" Jones expressed his frustration: "If leaders who claim to be leaders were doing positive work...we would not have a reason to meet," he noted.

Currently, Québec is home to

about 150 000 black residents from over twenty five African, Caribbean and South American countries.

On a smaller scale, Québec's black communities are segmented into the francophone, largely Haitian, but also African, communities, and the anglophone Caribbean and South American communities.

Linguistic barriers were evident even at the forum. Before the meeting, Jones recognised the

difficult task organisers had in stressing common interests among blacks from divergent backgrounds.

"We expect disagreement today, and we expect to rise to it," noted Jones.

"The time has come when black people in Québec, in Canada, in North America and the world everywhere should become conscious that in diversity there is strength, but in unity there is also strength."

Discussing racism, Germaine suggested that a paradox exists in calling for black unity while also fighting the white tendency to see all blacks as the same.

While the black community has grown since the 1950's when he immigrated from Haiti, Germaine noted, Québec and Canada are still racist societies. Germaine denounced the



TALKIN' ABOUT A COLLECTIVE

Canadian attitude of alleged non-racism which holds that "Our Canadian blacks, it's different for them than for the Americans."

Still today, stated Germaine, blacks in Canada face the reality that "one has to be better than the best to be considered average."

Germaine also touched on issues relevant to francophone blacks, but also referred to tensions not as problems but as potential sites for dialogue.

Many people referred to the unique situation faced by blacks in Québec. One man pointed out the difficult linguistic situation faced by Québec blacks which does not affect American blacks or blacks in anglophone provinces.

Issues of unity were brought up in several ways at the

meeting. The speakers were confronted about politically-charged topics such as language, religion and appropriate means of political mobilisation.

Diversity among Québec blacks was evident from the onset of the meeting. Jones and Lourdis opened the meeting with two prayers in English, and French, intended as an ecumenical statement for the harmony of black Muslims, Christians, Rastafarians and all religions.

However, three Muslim men responded to the opening prayer by saying a third prayer, and an African woman commented that some black people have no religion.

Later in the meeting, one participant, Dan Ochere, stressed the significance of not

only invoking God but also ancestors. He expressed disappointment that black leaders such as Malcolm X were not remembered at the beginning of the meeting.

Ochere also said that black leaders should remember Malcolm X's message that he learned in Pilgrimage, that blacks must concentrate their efforts upon educating black communities, while maintaining belief in the equality of all peoples.

"Malcolm said [that] we must accept all people as equal. We must accept white people who want to work with us," stated Ochere.

Ochere also said he was disappointed by the continuous use of the term "black" at the forum to refer to people of African descent.

Some felt that more time should have been spent on plans for concrete action. McGill student Carl Paret, of McGill's BSN and the National Society of Black Engineers, stated that he would have liked to see more discussion and less speeches, since all present at the meeting already agreed with the concept of black unity.

"People talked a lot about getting rid of barriers, and from the beginning the barriers were frustrating," noted Paret.

Jerry Adams was optimistic about his proposed work on the co-ordinating committee. "A smaller group of people will be more effective in getting the work accomplished."

The committee is scheduled to meet this Saturday.

brief

First Manuel Noriega, now Khun Sa

The United States is continuing its tradition of seeking to arrest former allies it now considers drug-trafficking terrorists. Last Thursday, embassy officials in the Burmese capitol of Rangoon announced a \$2 million reward for information leading to the arrest of Khun Sa, the leader of the Shan minority in northern Burma.

Khun Sa is viewed in Washington as a key player in the flow of heroin from mountainous Shan state to Western markets. In 1989, Sa was indicted by a New York grand jury of drug charges.

Khun Sa, however, came to power in the late 1960s as a result of the American government's involvement in

the heroin trade in the region. The Americans supported Sa, and bought his heroin, to provide a counter-weight to China's expansionist plans in southeast Asia.

The \$2 million reward comes as Sa's whereabouts, and future as head of the Shan state, appear increasingly in doubt.

For the last three years, Sa and his Muong Tai army have been maintaining a tense standoff against the Burmese army for control of the region. The resistance of Sa against the Slorc — the brutal military regime which came to power in 1988 — has mirrored the struggles of other local indigenous groups.

Sa's Muong Tai army, however, has held out much

longer than other groups. This has led many observers to reason that, instead of fighting, the Slorc had concluded a secret deal with Sa. In return for a share of Sa's heroin trade, it was reasoned, the Burmese would allow Sa to remain in power and ignore the American demand for extradition.

In recent months, though, the Burmese military has grown significantly stronger, and many observers suggest that the balance of military power has now tipped to the Slorc.

It appears that the informal accord is now at an end, and the Slorc are ready to arrest Khun Sa and take full control of the heroin trade.

"Nobody will let him go free

because during his time he has done something illegal," said Colonel Thein Shwe, military attaché to the Burmese embassy in Bangkok.

Should the Burmese successfully apprehend Sa, it would be of great importance to those within Burma who are struggling for an end to Slorc's murderous eight-year rule.

If the Burmese hand Sa over to the Americans, it would be a powerful public-relations tool for them to prove to the world community that they are the legitimate rulers of Burma. It would also subject another indigenous population to the gross violations of human rights that marks the Slorc.

by m-jmilloy

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Diverge reaches out to 'Generation X'

BLASTING OFF FROM THE TRADITIONAL MINDSET

by christine birbalsingh

Diverge, a hip new magazine aimed at 'Generation X' adds some spice and new perspective to common issues discussed among young people in Canada in the 1990s from feminism to drug abuse. The term 'Generation X' is never explicitly defined in the magazine (though it is represented on the cover), but *Diverge* seems to use it to refer broadly to the young adult. However, *Diverge* does not attempt to say whether or not young adults really exist as an entity that can be called 'Generation X', and it may not be relevant. Published out of Winnipeg, with contributions from Canadians across the country, the magazine offers some comfort and understanding to young adults who may be reacting to similar injustices or feeling similar passions.

In its premier Winter issue, one of the magazine's editorial directors, San Grewal, introduces the magazine in an editorial in which he discusses the problems young people may have when attempting to obtain bank loans. This recalls common feelings of frustration, failure and disappointment that many youths may experience when faced with the harsh realities of the 'adult world'. Grewal's comment has a happy ending but he leaves the reader with a feeling of uncertainty by showing the ups and downs of his financial endeavor. His editorial conveys a sense that something can always go wrong. Perhaps this parallels Grewal's concern about the

possible success of the magazine itself.

The magazine's articles all have a tendency toward disillusionment, but each have their own twist. Brad Fenwick's article called "Gone Fishing" is a witty and sarcastic comment about the well-known system of democracy and a relatively new one, the Internet. These two systems come together to form 'Democratech', the new and easier way to vote on parliamentary decisions. Politicians are no longer able to influence any decision but are simply allowed to explain each possible decision clearly, without expressing any judgement or opinion.

Citizens who do not own computers are able to vote by phone or by mail, so everyone will have access and the "[c]ontrol of organization, censorship, dissemination of information and regulatory bodies will always lie in the hands of the people, not the government." There is a solution to keep away hackers who could hack their way

through this highly secretive information. There are policies stating what constitutes a majority and methods allowing only those eligible to vote. All the nooks and crannies have been worked out and all that is left to be done is to get public approval.

The concept of Democratech raises questions about equality, fairness, honesty and whether or not traditional values and morals can be integrated into our futuristic society of the 21st century. Such integration could be threatened by the take-over

of computers and the obliteration of the human workforce. These are issues that are constantly being dealt with, but Fenwick adds a humorous and cynical approach.

This cynicism and sarcasm permeates through most of the articles in *Diverge*. This could be a comment about the disillusionment of 'Generation X' or it could be a sign of the term no longer standing for any injustices.

Whatever the case, *Diverge*'s wit and pleasantry should appeal to anyone interested in relevant topics about the well-being of society in the 1990s.

Apart from the notable ideas expressed in the articles, there are a few minor downsides to the magazine. The articles tend to be very long, for example. This is all right for some of the more creative ones but for the average article, a reader could very easily get turned off by the length. This is exacerbated by the style and layout of the magazine itself. Most of the

articles are in very small print and, in a couple of instances, the backgrounds are so dark or so complex that it makes reading difficult. Variation in print or separating the articles with more art work might give a sense of a lighter reading load which, for a magazine aimed at 'busy young adults', might be advantageous.

The artwork is clever at times, but at other times one might question the relevance or the meaning. This ties into the problem of the lack of unity. Each article follows one another with no real synthesis between them. Perhaps the theme of disillusionment or the style of sarcasm is meant to bring everything together, but if so, it is not very effective.

Nevertheless, *Diverge*'s articles are all very well-written, with sophisticated language, image-filled metaphors and well-researched background knowledge. Apart from the straight article, this premier issue offers an interview with economist Herman Daly, a short story about a boy and his absentee drug-addicted mother as well poetry.

Diverge appears to have an intelligent new outlook on present day Canadian topics. Subsequent issues are expected to appear four times a year and if the magazine continues in the footsteps of this premier issue, it is likely that it will improve and flourish. For all those 'Generation Xers' who want to blast out of the traditional mindset, *Diverge* is the way to go.



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